



OFFICE OF THE
WATER DEPARTMENT
TOWN HALL, 511 MAIN STREET
DUNSTABLE, MA 01827-1313
(978) 649-4514 FAX (978) 649-8893
waterdept@dunstable-ma.gov

Water Commission Minutes
Wednesday, December 29, 2021

Approved: 2/2/22

John O'Brien called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm
Other member(s) present: Mat Morton
Meeting held: At the Dunstable Town Hall, 511 Main Street, lower level
In attendance:

Reviewed & Signed:

- All Bills Outstanding Since Last Meeting
- All Payroll Outstanding Since Last Meeting

Department Operations Update

Mr. O'Brien reported on the latest. We remain consumed with the inter-municipal agreement with Pepperell. They have proposed a "mini" agreement to buy us a few months so we can finish off work on the inter-municipal agreement. So Pepperell expects to start February 1, 2022, but there is the off chance about whether they will actually do so. This prompted Mr. Morton to ask about provisions regarding SWSS in the existing contract for extension. Mr. O'Brien noted that the contract with them has an extension clause that goes out something like 30 or 90 days. The hope is not to have to do that, but it's an option. Mr. O'Brien then reported on a few other items. The repair on Lowell Street remains on going. It's unclear if that's been completed. SWSS hasn't reported. We also have a new SWSS water operator whose been assigned. Mr. O'Brien asked Mr. Voelker if the split has been addressed. Mr. Voelker responded that the Board of Selectmen have officially made the change from 25/75 to 50/50. They did so via the mechanism that Mr. Palaia recommended which involved the Tax Classification Hearing and adjusting the tax rate. Mr. Morton asked if the Water Dept. could consider any decrease in rates. Mr. Voelker suggested waiting until May for such a decision. We need to settle things with Pepperell on the inter-municipal agreement and to see how the end of year goes for the department's budget.

In recent years the department has needed end of year transfers from the town. It was generally agreed any hearing shouldn't be scheduled prior to May 2022. Mr. O'Brien then asked about the Affordable Housing Project and the latest round of RFP. Mr. Voelker outlined where things stand. The new RFP is out and formal notices will go in the *Lowell Sun* in January or February. There has been some interest already and it appears that things are going better than the last time. Mr. O'Brien asked a few questions about the number of units expected. Mr. Voelker responded it's unclear at this stage of things, but hopefully in the same range as the last proposed project. Mr. O'Brien then turned to the status of billing and accounts. Most accounts are paid up, some have even overpaid, and a few owe. The largest still owed is just north of \$1,200. As for general operations, things are running smoothly. Efforts continue to see the proposed usage of ARPA funds to convert Hillcrest Street from a dead end to a loop with pipe and a new main to come down Westford Street and connect Main Street where a main would be upgraded. The total cost would be around \$500,000. Mr. Voelker, conceding he may be a broken record on this, reminded that the Board of Selectmen remain committed to this use of the funds but are still conducting research on how to best utilize all of the towns ARPA funding.

Next Meeting/Regular Meetings

The next meeting is expected to be scheduled for January 19, 2022. Although, given the proximity to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day holiday the meeting may be shifted to a later date.

Authorization of Accounts Payable & Payroll

The Commission considered and signed off on all of its outstanding bills. The Commission then reviewed and approved payment of the bills and also signed all outstanding department payroll. Mr. O'Brien then briefly reported on all bills he'd reviewed and approved since the last meeting in his capacity as chair. He noted these are the usual ones, utilities, SWSS, alarm, and the like.

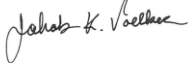
Minutes

The Commission considered the minutes from its meeting held on November 24, 2021. Seeing no reason to modify the minutes the Commission determined to accept the minute.

A motion was made by Mr. Morton to approve the minutes of November 24, 2021 as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. O'Brien and passed by majority vote.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. O'Brien at 6:25 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Morton and passed by majority vote.

Respectfully submitted by



Jakob K. Voelker
Administrative Assistant, Dunstable Water Department